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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT(S): Eiji IWATA ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.: 09792909-4938
SERIAL NO.: 09/352,422 GROUP ART UNIT: 2613
DATE FILED: July 12, 1999 EXAMINER: T. T. VO

INVENTION: "ENCODING APPARATUS AND METHOD OF SAME AND DECODING APPARATUS AND METHOD OF SAME"

RESPONSE "D" TO FINAL OFFICE ACTION

RECEIVED

AUG 09 2002

Technology Center 2600

BOX RCE
Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

SIR:

This amendment is filed in response to the Office Action of June 5, 2002. Please reconsider the application in view of the amendments and remarks presented below.

AMENDMENTS

Claims

Please amend the following claims:

D¹ cont. *Sub E*

1. (Three times amended) An encoding apparatus for producing encoded data blocks, wherein

each of said data blocks is one of a macroblock or a slice,

and wherein a first assigned data block assigned to a first process is produced in parallel with a second assigned data block assigned to a second process,

and wherein the first process and the second process respectively include at least:

encoding means for performing a predetermined transform with respect to predicted error or pixel value of the assigned data block and quantization with respect to a predetermined transform coefficient generated in said predetermined transform, and

variable length coding means for performing variable length coding with respect to the result of said quantization

to produce said encoded data blocks,

and wherein end of variable length coding of a data block is awaited when the variable length coding of a previous data block has not yet ended.

2. (Twice amended) An encoding apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein said variable length coding means detects completion of the variable length coding of a current data block and starts variable length coding of a subsequent data block.